

The earliest surviving tarot can be dated back to the 15th-century Visconti family. The nobility commissioned a Trionfi set & the resulting deck would become the basic model for the modern tarot. Early playing cards have origins in printing methods of the 9th-century Chinese Tang dynasty. The cards will be brought to Europe via Egypt—whose Mamluk cards become the unnoticed ancestor to the tarot varieties of today.

The rich—esoteric & exoteric—history of the tarot is a rather long one, with many claiming to have occulted knowledge of an as-yet-unknown 'truth' or secret insights into 'the real meaning of the tarot'. All of these claims are simple chicanery or a sleight of hand gesturing toward nothing. Michael Dummett's research into the tarot has shown that no figurative, alchemical, elemental, astrological, numerical & other attribution of a single tarot card is uncontested. Every card has meant something & something else entirely over the years.

the deep listening club
passos manuel

By the 17th-century, the structure of the cards begin to normalize: the 78 cards of the 22 major plus the 56 minor arcana; or the majors numbered in a sequence to plot out the fool's journey. Progressing under the shadow of the Enlightenment the tarot—researcher & occultist Etteilla takes an initial step into making the tarot a kind of systematized practice of 'cartomancy'.

Not until the 20th-century occult revival do we get the Rider-Waite-Smith or Thoth. These two being the most recognized tarot decks to be printed. Both are born out of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn—an occultism-devoted secret society that was founded by three Freemasons—although the architects of these two packs went off to head other magical organizations & sects.

Gone are the days of tarot being a secret kept by adepts of mystical communities. A once guarded tradition passed on from ear to ear, handshake to handshake has become available online & shipped-free anywhere.

#4: tarot
2025

The earliest surviving tarot can be dated back to the 15th-century Visconti family. The nobility commissioned a *Trionfi* set & the resulting deck would become the basic model for the modern tarot. Early playing cards have origins in printing methods of the 9th-century Chinese Tang dynasty. The cards will be brought to Europe via Egypt—whose *Mamluk* cards become the unnoticed ancestor to the tarot varieties of today.

The rich—esoteric & exoteric—history of the tarot is a rather long one, with many claiming to have occulted knowledge of an as-yet-unknown 'truth' or secret insights into 'the real meaning of the tarot'. All of these claims are simple chicanery or a sleight of hand gesturing toward nothing. Michael Dummett's research into the tarot has shown that no figurative, alchemical, elemental, astrological, numerical &tcera attribution of a single tarot card is uncontested. Every card has meant something & something else entirely over the years.

By the 17th-century, the structure of the cards begin to normalize: the 78 cards of the 22 major plus the 56 minor arcana; or the majors numbered in a sequence to plot out the fool's journey. Progressing under the shadow of the Enlightenment the tarot-researcher & occultist Etteilla takes an initial step into making the tarot a kind of systematized practice of 'cartomancy'.

Not until the 20th-century occult revival do we get the Rider-Waite-Smith or Thoth. These two being the most recognized tarot decks to be printed. Both are born out of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn—an occultism-devoted secret society that was founded by three Freemasons—although the architects of these two packs went off to head other magical organizations & sects.

Gone are the days of tarot being a secret kept by adepts of mystical communities. A once guarded tradition passed on from ear to ear, handshake to handshake has become available online & shipped-free anywhere.

As capitalism lifted itself away from its gold-standard & became a purely symbolic, unanchored system of general equivalence, the free love hippie movement found peace in New Age spirituality with its own read of Western esotericism. Able to shake out its Judeo-Christian roots, the cybernetic information age updated the tarot into an all-encompassing Rorschach Test where the 'ambiguous designs' of the tarot could be transformed into any archetype that fits.

By the late 20th- & early 21st-centuries, one can find any theme for your tarot: an erotic tarot? A Pokemon tarot? Robin Hood tarot? Cat, NeoPagan, queer, rave &tcera? As long as the main structure remains, it should be able to function as intended... Yet, not even the basic structure is kept in some tarot decks, a simple 'intuition' being enough 'to decipher' their figures.

The tarot is more ubiquitous than ever, & its influence is easily noticed. However, some artists continue to extend the tarot into new eccentricities: Suzanne Treister & her Hexen projects takes it to a limit. Hexen 2.0 tells a history of the Internet & Cybernetics in the form of a tarot deck while 5.0 does the same for Eco-Feminism.

There are countless films, albums, books, comics, & 'other entertainments' that are somehow based on the tarot. Its structure & suggestive symbols are suited to story-telling & modelling supplemental futures: a shuffle of the deck, a choice of spread & a new narrative is dealt to sense-make.

Some of what was heard:

- ruth white.....7 TRUMPS FROM THE TAROT
- &
- john zorn.....blue öyster cult
- alejandro jodorowsky.....the beatles
- moor mother.....nas
- aleister crowley.....bad bunny & jhayco
- walter wegmüller.....mary halverson
- doja cat.....patti smith
- genesis p-orridge.....joey bada\$\$
- rush.....yasuaki fujita

As capitalism lifted itself away from its gold-standard & became a purely symbolic, unanchored system of general equivalence, the free love hippie movement found peace in New Age spirituality with its own read of Western esotericism. Able to shake out its Judeo-Christian roots, the cybernetic information age updated the tarot into an all-encompassing Rorschach Test where the 'ambiguous designs' of the tarot could be transformed into any archetype that fits.

By the late 20th- & early 21st-centuries, one can find any theme for your tarot: an erotic tarot? A Pokemon tarot? Robin Hood tarot? Cat, Neopagan, queer, rave &tcera? As long as the main structure remains, it should be able to function as intended... Yet, not even the basic structure is kept in some tarot decks, a simple 'intuition' being enough 'to decipher' their figures.

The tarot is more audacious than ever, & its influence is easily noticed. However, some artists continue to extend the tarot into new eccentricities: Suzanne Treister & her Hexen projects takes it to a limit. Hexen 2.0 tells a history of the Internet & Cybernetics in the form of a tarot deck while 5.0 does the same for Eco-Feminism.

There are countless films, albums, books, comics, & other entertainments that are somehow based on the tarot. Its structure & suggestive symbols are suited to story-telling & modelling supplemental futures: a shuffle of the deck, a choice of spread & a new narrative is dealt to sense-make.

Some of what was heard:
ruth white.....7 TRUMPS FROM THE TAROT

&

john zorn.....blue öyster cult
alejandro jodorowsky.....the beetles
moor mother.....nas
aleister crowley.....bad bunny & jhayco
walter wegmüller.....mary halvorson
doja cat.....patti smith
genesis p-ordidge.....joey badass
rush.....yasuaki fujita